IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 2, 8, 12, 18, 26, and 27 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 5, 9, 11, 15, and 19 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A synthesis unit selection apparatus comprising:

obtaining means for obtaining a string of synthesis units to one or more orders, which satisfies received strings, based upon a minimum distortion standard, wherein the string of synthesis units is obtained by concatenating stored synthesis units, and the minimum distortion standard determines an order of distortion values that are produced upon obtaining the string of synthesis units from the stored synthesis units; and

selection means for selecting a synthesis unit to be stored in a memory based on the string of synthesis units obtained by said obtaining ~~means~~ means,

wherein at least one of a concatenation distortion and a modification distortion is produced, the concatenation distortion being produced upon concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit, and the modification distortion being produced upon modifying a synthesis unit, and

wherein said obtaining means determines the modification distortion by looking up a table that stores the modification distortion.

2. (Cancelled)

2

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further

comprising:

text input means for inputting text data,

wherein the received strings are included in the text data inputted by said text

input means

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further

comprising:

registration means for registering the synthesis unit selected by said selection

means to a synthesis unit inventory in the memory.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to ~~claim 2~~ claim 1, wherein

said selections means selects a synthesis unit on the basis of a weighted sum of the concatenation

and modification distortions.

6-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to ~~claim 2~~ claim 1, wherein

said obtaining means determines the concatenation distortion by looking up a table that stores the

concatenation distortion.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A synthesis unit selection method comprising:

an obtaining step of obtaining a string of synthesis units to one or more orders, which satisfies received strings, based upon a minimum distortion standard, wherein the string of synthesis units is obtained by concatenating stored synthesis units, and the minimum distortion standard determines an order of distortion values that are produced upon obtaining the string of synthesis units from the stored synthesis units; and

a selection step of selecting a synthesis unit to be stored in a memory based on the string of synthesis units obtained in said obtaining ~~step~~ step,

wherein at least one of a concatenation distortion and a modification distortion is produced, the concatenation distortion being produced upon concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit, and the modification distortion being produced upon modifying a synthesis unit, and

wherein in said obtaining step, the modification distortion is determined by looking up a table that stores the modification distortion.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of:

inputting text data,

wherein the received strings are included in the text data inputted in said inputting step.

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of:

registering the synthesis unit selected in said selection step in a synthesis unit inventory.

15. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~claim 12~~ claim 11, wherein in said selection step, a synthesis unit is selected on the basis of a weighted sum of the concatenation and modification distortions.

16-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~claim 2~~ claim 11, wherein in said obtaining step, the concatenation distortion is determined by looking up a table that stores the concatenation distortion.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A computer readable storage medium storing a program that implements the method recited in claim 11.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said selection means selects a synthesis unit that is most frequently used in a plurality of strings of synthesis units obtained by said obtaining means.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said selection means selects one or more synthesis units for a type of synthesis unit, in an order of frequencies of occurrence in a plurality of strings of synthesis units obtained by said obtaining means.

24. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein in said selection step, a synthesis unit that is most frequently used in a plurality of strings of synthesis units obtained in said obtaining step is selected.

25. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein in said selection step, one or more synthesis units for a type of synthesis unit is selected, in an order of frequencies of occurrence in a plurality of strings of synthesis units obtained in said obtaining step.

26-27. (Cancelled)